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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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continuation sheet:

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on 04/14/2010 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for the following reasons:

Applicant's argument:

"A key point here is that Hickey describes electronic communications as unique entities, without reliance on copies. Hickey describes routing and/or operating on incoming electronic communications, and associating status information with the communication based on those actions. Hickey, however, does not teach or suggest directing independent copies of a particular communication to different users' mailboxes. Doing so would go against the teachings of Hickey because Hickey relies on group mailboxes when two or more users need to view the same communication. Hickey repeatedly describes the benefits of such shared communication, and the drawbacks of independent copies of communications in separate mailboxes."

"Hickey's solution to the disadvantage cited by the Examiner above is to create group mailboxes rather than instantiate copies of the e-mail in separate mailboxes. The Applicant's claims, on the other hand, recite independent copies of the electronic message and relates those copies to one another through an indicator. Hickey is clearly teaching away from the Applicant's claimed subject matter."

Examiner's response:

Hickey teaches at para. [0040] "Any member of the group 22A1 can define one or more alternate delivery instructions for the one or more inbound electronic communications 53A1. For example, each member of group 22A1 can specify a match criteria in a criteria template and then define in a notification specification rules to execute in when inbound electronic communications 53A1 satisfies the match criteria. The rules can prescribe, for example, an automated response or automated forwarding or directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications 53A1 to a selected mailbox other than the default inbox 50A1 of the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1."

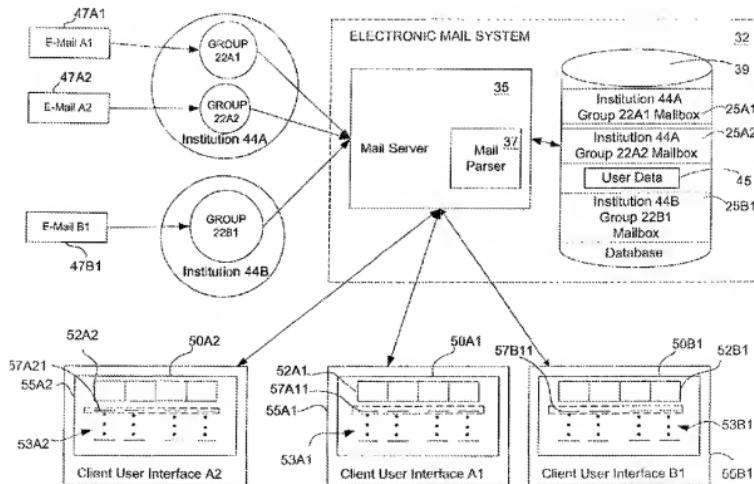


FIG. 3

The description of the para.[0040] refers to Fig.3. Para. [0040] refers to the “default inbox 50A1” (emphasis added: note, this is inbox) of the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1.

Further para. [0040] indicates “selected mailbox” is other than the default inbox 50A1 of the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1, to which one or more electronic communications are automatically forwarded.

This means “selected mailbox” is the alternate inbox of one or more electronic communications that are automatically forwarded to for the group member who selected the forwarding of one or more electronic communications that he/she was supposed to see in the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1.

Thus Hickey teaches directing independent copies of a particular communication to different users' mailboxes.

Hickey further teaches at para. [0015], “It is still a further aspect of the invention to provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

Hickey teaches at para [0043] “In response to acts by one member of group 22A1 that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator 57A1 for any other group member viewing the status indicator 57A11.”

Thus, Hickey teaches:

- 1) "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or more electronic communications",
- 2) "each member of group can specify an automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications to a selected mailbox other than the default inbox of the group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then,
- 3) "in response to acts by one member of group that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator. ("once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.")

The reasons why Hickey came up with this system and method is stated in para. [0007], "some group members may be deprived of information regarding the received e-mail message and the actions taken by the other group members in connection with the message. In addition, there is limited control on the flow, distribution and processing of the information intended to be shared among the members of group 22."

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